

# **WEST DES MOINES HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING**

## **Thursday, August 14, 2014**

**Commissioners Present:** Justine Morton, Ila Plasencia, Bernell Edwards, Sanjita Pradhan

**Commissioners Absent:** Frank Harty

**Staff Representatives:** Althea Holcomb, Mindy Hotovec

**Guests:** none present

**Call to order:** Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

### **1. Roll Call**

### **2. Introduction of new Human Rights Commissioner, Sanjita Pradhan**

### **3. Approval of June 2014 minutes**

- Ila Plasencia moved to approve; Bernell Edwards seconded the motion and the minutes were approved as read.

### **2. Opportunity for Public to Address the Commission**

- None present

### **3. Chair Report**

- Current packet information was reviewed.
- Commissioners were asked to notify Mindy if they would like to attend the Iowa Civil Rights Awards luncheon in October.

### **5. Staff Report**

- Althea reported that no funds had been spent this fiscal year. Mindy will email the current finance report to Commissioners.

### **6. Report on Human Rights Phone Line**

- No calls to report.

### **7. Report from Commissioners on recent activities**

- Ila is serving on the planning committee for the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Civil and Human Rights to be held on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at Des Moines University. Issues being considered for discussion include unions, minorities not being paid fair wages and unaccompanied children crossing American borders from Central America. Justine questioned unions as a human rights issue and suggested it was more of an employer issue. Sanjita mentioned the disproportionate incarceration of minorities as an additional topic for the committee to consider.
- Ila will email information on the Latino Heritage Festival in September.
- Bernell will email information regarding the September Multi-Cultural Fair at Evelyn Davis Park in Des Moines.
- Sanjita asked how the Commission promotes its mission and where the phone number for the Commission is published. Althea mentioned the WDM Magazine and the Human Services website; Mindy will confirm.
- Justine described a recent negative experience at a restaurant where she felt she experienced discrimination. Sanjita asked if the Commission can write a letter to a business when discrimination is reported. Justine said this is a role the Commission can take on.

## **8. Old Business**

- None discussed.

## **9. New Business**

- None discussed.

## **10. Next Meeting Date**

- The next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 9, 2014.

**Adjourn:** Bernell Edwards moved to adjourn; Ila Plascencia seconded the motion.  
The meeting adjourned at 4:47 pm.

**Notetaker:** Mindy Hotovec

DRAFT